

INTRODUCTION

The book has been prepared by members of the Sudbury Ancient Fife and Drum Company, and is intended to provide instruction for recruits as well as provide them with music for some of the standard simple tunes played. Though the intention was to provide all easy tunes, some are a little more difficult. These were included to provide fife music for some of the standard drum beats and to provide a challenge for some of the more enterprising recruits. In all twenty-seven tunes are provided, giving the recruit a variety from which to pick the ten needed for entry into Company membership.

1 A Note on the Title

In years past, the Sudbury Ancient Fife and Drum Company had three categories of members: recruits, who were beginners trying to master their instruments; A-corps members who had mastered 10 tunes and were permitted to parade with the Company; and full members who could take part in paid shows. The latter were sometimes known as the "cocktail" corps (though for some reason, never as the B-corps).

While on parade the fife master would be careful to call a good assortment of the easier tunes so as not to discourage the A-corps members and these got to be known as A-corps tunes. The term was used frequently, but Les Longworth III and Patrick Moylan, a couple of young fifers who speedily passed through the A-corps phase, didn't hear it quite right and thought for years that these were "Acorn" tunes. Sometimes a misunderstanding is better than the real thing, and hence the name for this book of beginners' tunes.

2 How to Join

The Sudbury Ancient Fife and Drum Company is open to anyone over ten, man or woman, and new members are recruited each fall. During the winter months, after the Colonial Faire and Muster, instruction is provided free of charge to the recruits each Wednesday from 7 to 8 PM at the Peter Noyes Elementary School in Sudbury. The regular members practice from 8 to 9 PM. The only initial cost is for a plastic fife or a pair of suitable drumsticks and a practice pad.

Recruits are accepted into the regular membership after mastering ten tunes and are then welcome to parade with the Company at all events. At that time, of course, there will be the cost of Colonial clothing. That cost varies widely, depending on one's taste, and whether there are any family members who are tailors.

After the annual march to Concord, plus a week to let the blisters heal, the regular members practice outdoors each Wednesday evening at the Wayside Inn for the summer, where they add to the colonial atmosphere, and provide entertainment for visitors from all over the world.